



The GRANGE

Issue: 82

DECEMBER 2000

CHAIR'S REPORT

Hello again, epistle number two. I hope you all had a good summer. I finished mine with a bus trip to Eastern Ontario organized by the ROM. We visited Fort Henry in Kingston, Upper Canada Village at Morrisburg and Prince Edward County. All places I had never been before. Fort Henry was built during the War of 1812, re-designed and re-built in the 1830s and is now restored to the 1860s. The costumed guides, as army officers, are mostly students from Queen's University. They do an excellent job explaining the lives of not only the officers but also the common soldiers and their wives. Our guide also gave us a spirited demonstration of how to fire a cannon (knowledge that I am sure will come in useful someday). Fort Henry also has a mascot, a goat. A "goat officer" takes care of him and exercises him regularly. Upper Canada Village is of course, like Black Creek, a collection of buildings brought to the site. Nevertheless it has a real small town feeling, and could easily have existed. Here too, the date represented is the 1860s and the costumed and bilingual interpreters are excellent and talented! The carpenter, the lumber workers, the tinsmith, the cheesemaker are all hard at work.

I don't get to talk to visitors as often as I did but twice recently I have met visitors who complimented us on the settings or upsettings of the dining room and the best bedroom. They both appreciated the "lived-in" look, commenting that it gave them a real idea of what life would have been like in a house such as The Grange. Another

vote of approval came from Sandy Oliver writing in *Food History News* (vol XI No.IV). She writes that the dining room looked as though the servants had just been called away, and compares the arrangement to more usual "static" table settings. She states, "While it is pleasant to see an array of dishes flanked by its flatware, if you have seen one dish, then, well, you have seen them all." Ms Oliver also complimented The Grange kitchen and the cooks who gave a live demonstration, and gave her a taste of apple pudding! The whole article is worth reading.

Last, but most certainly not least, is our red-letter day November 7th when Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada, paid us a visit. It has been a tradition at The Grange since 1887 for the current Governor General (Lord Lansdowne was the first) to come to The Grange and drink a toast to the monarch from the Simcoe coaching glass. This tradition was started by Goldwin Smith and was broken only once when the last Governor General, Romeo Leblanc was unable to come.

Sorry, one other item, my congratulations to Tania Cañas, Cathy Stroud and Marg McGuigan. On a Wednesday afternoon two or three weeks ago Tania having just passed her review with flying colours, realised Cathy's crew had a Spanish speaking visitor who was unable to communicate with us. Tania stepped in and gave the visitor a tour of the house. Cathy expressed her appreciation in a note to Marg who passed it along to me. This is the kind of teamwork we should always aim for at The Grange.

- Avril Stringer, Chair, The Grange.

My name is David Kablun and I am a co-op student from Richview Collegiate Institute. I am working in The Grange as a historic cook. I work every second day (except weekends and holidays), I will be working until mid-February.

What I hope to gain from this experience is an understanding of what life was like in the early years of Toronto, and how the preparation of food, and the food itself was either different or similar to today's.

I have been working at The Grange for a month now and I am getting more of an understanding of how the house is run. I am looking forward to the next four months here at The Grange.

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Her Excellency, The Right Honourable, Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada, drinks from the Simcoe glass at The Grange on Nov 7 - a tradition at The Grange since 1887. Shown with her Excellency is Matthew Tietelbaum and John Ralston Saul.

The Grange Volunteer Executive 2000-2001

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SECRETARY

Catherine Stroud

TREASURER/RESEARCH

Avril Stringer

COMMITTEES

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Helvi Hunter

HOUSE COMMITTEE

Rotation of the committee
members while Jane Heinemann
absent

HISTORIC KITCHENS

Anna Patrick

MODERN KITCHEN

Jane Ash & Elvira Putrus

VICE CHAIR GRANGE VOLUNTEERS

Georgette Caldwell

DAY CAPTAINS

Monday: Jane Heinemann
(on leave)

Tuesday: Elvira Putrus

Wednesday: Cathy Stroud

Wednesday Bridge: Helvi Hunter

Wednesday Eve: Marg McGuigan

Thursday: June O'Brien

Friday: Beverly Sutton

Saturday: Katharine Brown

Sunday: Edna Rigby

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REMINDER

Please submit your
news articles
for the next
Grange Newsletter by
March 7, 2001.

VOLUNTEER UP-COMING EVENTS

The Grange Volunteer Training Suppers

January: Dressing in the 19th Century

Speaker: Traci Gorman, Costume technician for Heritage Toronto

Date: Monday, January 15, 2001. Music Room, The Grange

February: House Furnishings

Speaker: Margaret Machell

Date: Monday, February 19, 2001. Music Room, The Grange

March: No Volunteer Training Supper due to March Break Activities

April: Eating and Drinking in the Early 19th Century

Speaker: Dorothy Duncan, Executive Director, Ontario Historical Society

Date: Monday, April 9, 2001. Music Room, The Grange

House Decoration for the Christmas Season

The Grange will be decorated as usual in early December to reflect the Christmas Season during the time period of the house - 1840s.

Many visitors return each year to feel the seasonal warmth of the house at this time.

Music at The Grange: Carols from the Cathedral

A Christmas Concert by candlelight with cider and shortbread.

Date: Wednesday, Dec 13, at 7:00 pm

Music Room, The Grange

\$10 / \$8 AGO members

THE PLEASURE OUR VISITORS BRING

The Sunday shift has been a most rewarding one for our group. We have had many interesting visitors.

Our "star" was Sam Waterston of *Law & Order* but others include the descendant of the Rev. John McCaul (refer to Sept/00 newsletter), descendants of the Boultons (one from as far away as Minnesota) and descendants of the Robinson family. I refer to a couple celebrating their 60th Wedding Anniversary in the Agora Restaurant, courtesy of their children and then afterwards coming to The Grange. The husband had taught at the Ontario College of Art in the 1950s and frequently brought his students to the Art Gallery and The Grange. He hadn't seen the house since it was restored and was delighted to see how lovely it looks. It was also a pleasure to hear that Emily Robinson's great, great, great grand-daughter, Shawna LeFroy visited on Nov. 10th. She was happy to see the original paintings of the Robinson sisters and Lady Robinson.

Another interesting couple celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary at the Agora Restaurant dropped in to see us. The woman had worked as a domestic for the Robinsons in the 1940s and was really excited when she found out about the connection between the Robinsons and the Boultons.

On another occasion, we received visitors who attended Cornell University and on seeing the Goldwin Smith Library commented, "Is that The Goldwin Smith who taught at Cornell?" - the look of pleasure when assured "Yes" cannot be adequately described. Still other students who had studied about Goldwin Smith and finding his home here in Toronto were almost speechless. Another couple, from Reading, England, who were familiar with the name, could not believe their luck at seeing Goldwin Smith's library in Canada.

Other visitors included Mary Alice Stuart with her husband and grandson re-visiting The Grange and telling us about her experiences as Chair of the Restoration Committee in the 1960s. She was a charming lady. Although he did not visit The Grange, the Sunday volunteers did see Premier Mike Harris and his teenage sons enjoying lunch at the Agora Restaurant.

These are just some of our happy moments of which we wanted to share. Each of us have special memories of our visitors. We are fortunate to be volunteering in such an interesting venue!

-By Enid Martin, Sunday Volunteer, The Grange

Earlier in October, I spent two interesting days in Woodstock, Ontario at the National Historic Sites Alliance of Ontario conference. The NHSAO is an unincorporated body that links over 240 National Historic Sites that have been designated in Ontario. The organization promotes the commemorative integrity and value of sites through co-operative action by site owners, managers and stakeholders. Commemorative integrity refers to the health and wholeness of the site. It occurs when the resources that symbolize or represent its importance are not impaired or under threat, when the reasons for its national historic significance are communicated effectively and when the heritage values of the site are respected. In order to be eligible for federal funding, a site must produce a commemorative integrity statement. The Grange Council used the CIS format in creating our new mission/vision statement, but we have not gone through the formal process. This does not change our status as a National Historic Site.

A site can be recommended for designation on the advice of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. This is an advisory board that reviews submissions and advises the Minister of Heritage on each proposal. Proposals can be submitted by members of the public.

To be designated, a site must meet one of four criteria. It must illustrate an exceptional creative achievement in concept and design, technology or planning, or a significant stage in the development of Canada. It must illustrate or symbolize, in whole or in part, a cultural tradition, a way of life or ideas important to the development of Canada. It must be explicitly and meaningfully associated or identified with persons who are deemed to be of national historic significance. And, finally, it must be explicitly and meaningfully associated or identifies with events that are deemed to be of national his-

toric significance.

So often we only think of The Grange in terms of its local, Toronto history, that we forget our national importance (Goldwin Smith and Edmund Walker are also designated as people of national historic significance). We received our designation in 1970 and our plaque, received at a ceremony in 1984, reads as follows:

The Grange was built in about 1817 for D'Arcy Boulton Jr. At one time, the town of York (now Toronto) was surrounded by residential estates belonging to prominent citizens, and The Grange is one of the few to survive. Its symmetrical five-bay façade and central pediment reflect the conservative influence of the British classical tradition of the 18th century. The west wing represents two later additions. Given to the Art Museum of Toronto in 1911, The Grange is now owned by the AGO and is restored to the 1835-40 period.

In 1975, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada designated Goldwin Smith a person of national historic significance. His plaque also received in 1984, reads as follows:

Born and educated in England, Goldwin Smith taught history at Oxford and Cornell before moving to Toronto in 1871. He married Harriette Boulton in 1875, widow of William Henry Boulton of The Grange. From The Grange, Smith wrote in controversial and compelling style for periodicals such as Canadian Monthly, the Week and his own Bystander. Initially a proponent of Canadian nationalism, he later became, contrary to growing imperial sentiment, a strong advocate of commercial union with the US. This view in 1891 inspired his best-known book, Canada and the Canadian Question.

I think it is important to let visitors know about this. So, here is one more statement to add to our introduction! Not only are we the first home of the AGO, the oldest remaining brick

EARLY DENTAL HYGIENE

We have as you all know, a toothbrush in the Best Bedroom. Visitors occasionally comment on this, so I thought it might be useful to have some information on hand. The Grange toothbrush was made in Paris but we seem to have no other information and no date. However, toothbrushes have a long and interesting history. It is believed that, in the 15th century, the Chinese were making toothbrushes with bristles from the hair of the wild boar and with handles of bone.

Sophia, Electress of Hanover refers to a toothbrush in her memoirs, c.1640, and early in the 19th century dental authorities were issuing instructions about the desired hardness and/or softness of the toothbrush (sound familiar?). In fact a picture of Sophia shows her with various toilet articles including a two-headed toothbrush, one head hard and the other soft.

In the Middle Ages in France and Italy chew sticks were the favoured method for cleaning the teeth. The Italians used sticks of cypress, aloe, pine, rosemary or juniper, whereas the French preferred licorice, lucern or mallow roots. Pliny (23-79 AD) wrote that great care was given to the hygiene and beauty of the teeth by the Romans and other nations.

Gionanno of Arcoli, Professor of Bologna and Padua in the 15th century said the teeth should be cleaned at once, after every meal! And, Benjamin James in 1814 advocated brushing "from the root to the crown ... to spread the gum more elegantly against the enamel!". Guy de Chauliac (14th century) warned of rough treatment to the teeth. Avicenna (980-1047) an Arabian physician warned of the dangers of harsh or coarse dentifrices.

Over the years many things have been suggested as cleansing agents for the teeth. Salt and water has been suggested as has charcoal and even sugar and honey. This last sounds tasty but not too good for the teeth perhaps.

- Avril Stringer, Chair, Grange Research.

MOLASSES and GINGER

By Anna Patrick, Volunteer Executive member for The Grange Historic Kitchens

Two questions were recently posed to me, and in researching them, I discovered a great deal of information that I didn't know about molasses and ginger. I pass this on to those of you who wish to know more about the foods we use.

The first question was, "What is unsulfured molasses?"

I found the answer in Harold McGee's book On Food and Cooking: The Science and Lore of the Kitchen (New York: Collier Books Macmillan Publishing Company, 1984).

The word molasses is from the Latin for "honeylike" (mellaceus) and is generally defined as the syrup left over after the available sucrose has been crystallized from the juice of the sugar cane. In order to extract as much sucrose as possible from cane juice, crystallization is performed in several steps, each of which results in a different grade of molasses. "First" molasses is the product of centrifuging off the raw sugar crystals and still contains some removable sucrose. It is then mixed with some uncrystallized sugar syrup, crystallized and centrifuged again. The resulting "second" molasses is even more concentrated in impurities than the first. Repeating this process once more yields "third", or final, or "blackstrap" (from Dutch "stroop" for syrup) molasses. The very dark color of the final product is due to the extreme caramelization of the remaining sugars and to chemical reactions induced by the high temperatures repeatedly reached during boiling. Other chemical reactions give final molasses a very harsh flavor that make it generally unfit for human consumption. It is sometimes made edible by blending it with corn syrup. Mostly it is used as cattle food and in the making of rum.

First and second molasses have been used in foods for many years, and for a long time were the only form of sugar available to the slaves and the poor of the southern United States. Until fairly recently, most of the edible molasses produced in Louisiana had a heavy sulfurous taste because sulfur dioxide was used to clarify and lighten the color of cane juice. The current trend, however, is toward very mild flavors. Today, premium molasses is made by blending clarified cane syrups with first molasses in order to maintain better control over quality.

Thus we can say (by inference) that it would seem that most, if not all, modern molasses would be unsulfured, but what molasses would have been available to the Boultons is still an unknown. The centrifuge was patented in the middle of the nineteenth century and only became part of sugar manufacturing at that time, so the whole process was different prior to that. Until the early nineteenth century molasses was the liquid that ran out of the bottom hole in the cone-shaped moulds in which sugar was washed, moulded, crystallized and dried. I have as yet not discovered whether sulfur was used at that time to clarify or lighten it. However, if an old recipe calls for unsulfured molasses, any molasses normally available today would be suitable.

Despite claims to the contrary, molasses, even blackstrap, contains only very minor amounts of nutrients other than carbohydrates.

The second question was: "Would fresh ginger have been used by the Boultons?"

Elizabeth David answers this question in her book Spices, Salt and Aromatics in the English Kitchen (Great Britain: Richard Clay Limited, 1970).

She says of green ginger root, "It is available in Indian and Chinese grocery shops but it is highly perishable, so it is useless to lay in a supply." This tells us that in the days of sailing ships it would not be possible to ship raw ginger literally halfway around the world; it could only have arrived dried. She says, "you can scrape it [fresh ginger], slice it and store it in a jar of dry sherry, which should be kept well

stoppered in the refrigerator." She also suggests freezing it, which is what I do in my own kitchen. I grate or slice as much as I need from the frozen piece of ginger root and return the remainder to the freezer.

Her history of ginger is as follows:

GINGER: In its many manifestations as a spice and as a sweetmeat, all ginger comes from the root or more properly the rhizome, in old English called a *race* or *hand*, or *zingiber officinale*.

Although Chinese ginger preserved in syrup is highly prized (mainly I suspect because of the jars in which it is exported to the west) the first quality of dried root ginger comes from Jamaica. It is from the dried root that we get the ground or powdered ginger which goes into our cakes and gingerbreads and puddings. Jamaican powdered ginger is easily distinguished from coarser varieties by its very pale colour and aroma which is quite delicate and distinguished compared to the hot ginger of Cochín [China] and the harsh peppery taste of African varieties. The latter are the ones used to make essences and extracts which flavour ginger beer and other soft drinks, and no doubt also the ginger cakes and biscuits of commerce. It is probably the preponderance of these cheaper varieties used as flavourings which has made ginger unpopular with those who value their palates, and certainly, even a little of the finest ginger goes a long way. It can be a revelation, though, to taste a mild ginger and saffron spiced chicken or rice dish, or a delicate Grasmere gingerbread mixture.

For once it was not the crusaders who introduced this spice to England for it was known here before the conquest. Probably it was brought via their African colonies by the Romans, who used it in massive quantity. By the fifteenth century the popularity of ginger must have been tremendous, at any rate if one is to believe the cookery books. In every other recipe of the time one finds instructions to mix together "canelle (cinnamon), pepir, gyngere", 'take wyne and caste thereto powder of gyngere, pepir and saffroun, and salt'. This last is part of a formula for a dish called 'chawettys', made of minced veal or pork, mixed with the wine and spices already listed, plus egg yolks, verjuice (juice of unripe grapes or crabapples - in effect a kind of fruit vinegar), dates, currants, cloves and mace, all baked in a pastry. In fact a kind of mincemeat pie - but nearly every dish, meat, fish, or fowl, from 'crane roasted' to 'a custarde' of veal and herbs and 'sole, boiled, rost or fryed', has the same or similar litany of spices, although ginger and 'saffroun' seem to win out over mace and cloves. Nutmeg, spelled notemygge, hardly gets a look in at all. Small wonder that in English, ginger became a synonym for hot and lively while racy in this context probably came from the same source - a race of ginger.

By the eighteenth century the ginger appears to have simmered down considerably, since it now figures mainly in cakes and puddings and cream (a ginger ice cream can be excellent) which would be recognizable today, although one eighteenth century housekeeper, Charlotte Mason, from whose receipt book a volume entitled 'The Ladies Assistant' was compiled and published in about 1780, puts ginger in her Yorkshire pudding. Gingerbreads and cakes have long been great favourites in Yorkshire, and no doubt there would always have been ginger handy in the spice boxes of local housekeepers. In my childhood it was customary to hand round a bowl of powdered ginger when melon was served as a first course for lunch. The ginger was necessary we were told to counteract the chilling effects of the melon, a tradition which still survives.

I hope this provides some helpful background to those of you who wish to discuss these extremely important ingredients of The Grange period.